



[4910-13-P]

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

**Federal Aviation Administration**

**14 CFR Part 39**

**[Docket No. FAA-2015-8134; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-256-AD]**

**RIN 2120-AA64**

**Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes**

**AGENCY:** Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

**SUMMARY:** We propose to adopt a new airworthiness directive (AD) for all Airbus Model A300 series airplanes; and Airbus Model A300 B4-600, B4-600R, and F4-600R series airplanes; and Model A300 C4-605R Variant F airplanes (collectively called Model A300-600 series airplanes). This proposed AD was prompted by a report of cracking of the lower tension bolt area at the rib one junction (both sides) of the lower wing. This proposed AD would require repetitive inspections for cracking of the fasteners and of the fitting around the fastener holes at the Frame (FR) 40 lower wing location, and corrective actions if necessary. We are proposing this AD to detect and correct crack initiation of the fittings of the FR40 lower wing locations, which could result in reduced structural integrity of the airplane.

**DATES:** We must receive comments on this proposed AD by [INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

**ADDRESSES:** You may send comments by any of the following methods:

- Federal eRulemaking Portal: Go to <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.

- Fax: (202) 493-2251.

- Mail: U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, DC 20590.

- Hand Delivery: U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, DC, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

For service information identified in this proposed AD, contact Airbus SAS, Airworthiness Office – EAW, 1 Rond Point Maurice Bellonte, 31707 Blagnac Cedex, France; telephone +33 5 61 93 36 96; fax +33 5 61 93 44 51; email [account.airworth-eas@airbus.com](mailto:account.airworth-eas@airbus.com); Internet <http://www.airbus.com>. You may view this referenced service information at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 425-227-1221.

### **Examining the AD Docket**

You may examine the AD docket on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2015-8134; or in person at the Docket Operations office between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this proposed AD, the regulatory evaluation, any

comments received, and other information. The street address for the Docket Operations office (telephone (800) 647-5527) is in the ADDRESSES section. Comments will be available in the AD docket shortly after receipt.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Dan Rodina, Aerospace Engineer, International Branch, ANM-116, Transport Airplane Directorate, FAA, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, WA 98057-3356; telephone 425-227-2125; fax 425-227-1149.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**Comments Invited**

We invite you to send any written relevant data, views, or arguments about this proposed AD. Send your comments to an address listed under the ADDRESSES section. Include “Docket No. FAA-2015-8134; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-256-AD” at the beginning of your comments. We specifically invite comments on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of this proposed AD. We will consider all comments received by the closing date and may amend this proposed AD based on those comments.

We will post all comments we receive, without change, to <http://www.regulations.gov>, including any personal information you provide. We will also post a report summarizing each substantive verbal contact we receive about this proposed AD.

**Discussion**

The European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union, has issued EASA Airworthiness Directive

2014-0272, dated December 12, 2014 (referred to after this as the Mandatory Continuing Airworthiness Information, or “the MCAI”), to correct an unsafe condition for all Airbus Model A300 series airplanes; and Airbus Model A300 B4-600, B4-600R, and F4-600R series airplanes; and Model A300 C4-605R Variant F airplanes (collectively called Model A300-600 series airplanes). The MCAI states:

Following the A300-600 Extended Service Goal (ESG2) exercise, specific inspections for cracks were performed in fittings of frame (FR) 40, in areas not covered by any existing task.

Findings were identified on an A300-600 aeroplane withdrawn from service in the lower tension bolt area at rib one junction (both sides).

This condition, if not detected and corrected, could lead to crack initiation, affecting the structural integrity of the aeroplane.

To address this potential unsafe condition, an inspection programme was developed for the fitting around the fastener holes located at FR40 lower wing junction, left-hand (LH) and right-hand (RH) sides.

For the reasons described above, this [EASA] AD requires repetitive High Frequency Eddy Current (HFEC) inspections and rototest inspections of the fitting around the fastener holes located at FR40 lower wing junction and, depending on findings, accomplishment of a repair.

The corrective actions include a repair using a method approved by the Manager, International Branch, ANM-116, Transport Airplane Directorate, FAA; or the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA); or Airbus’s EASA Design Organization Approval (DOA).

You may examine the MCAI in the AD docket on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2015-8134.

#### **Related Service Information under 1 CFR part 51**

We reviewed Airbus Service Bulletins A300-57-0257 and A300-57-6115, both dated April 4, 2014. The service information describes procedures for repetitive inspections for cracking of the fasteners and of the fitting around the fastener holes at the FR40 lower wing location. This service information is reasonably available because the interested parties have access to it through their normal course of business or by the means identified in the ADDRESSES section of this NPRM.

#### **FAA's Determination and Requirements of This Proposed AD**

This product has been approved by the aviation authority of another country, and is approved for operation in the United States. Pursuant to our bilateral agreement with the State of Design Authority, we have been notified of the unsafe condition described in the MCAI and service information referenced above. We are proposing this AD because we evaluated all pertinent information and determined an unsafe condition exists and is likely to exist or develop on other products of the same type design.

#### **Explanation of "RC" Procedures and Tests in Service Information**

The FAA worked in conjunction with industry, under the Airworthiness Directive Implementation Aviation Rulemaking Committee (ARC), to enhance the AD system. One enhancement was a new process for annotating which procedures and tests in the service information are required for compliance with an AD. Differentiating these procedures and tests from other tasks in the service information is expected to improve an owner's/operator's understanding of crucial AD requirements and help provide consistent

judgment in AD compliance. The procedures and tests identified as Required for Compliance (RC) in any service information have a direct effect on detecting, preventing, resolving, or eliminating an identified unsafe condition.

As specified in a NOTE under the Accomplishment Instructions of the specified service information, procedures and tests that are identified as RC in any service information must be done to comply with the proposed AD. However, procedures and tests that are not identified as RC are recommended. Those procedures and tests that are not identified as RC may be deviated from using accepted methods in accordance with the operator's maintenance or inspection program without obtaining approval of an alternative method of compliance (AMOC), provided the procedures and tests identified as RC can be done and the airplane can be put back in an airworthy condition. Any substitutions or changes to procedures or tests identified as RC will require approval of an AMOC.

### **Costs of Compliance**

We estimate that this proposed AD affects 166 airplanes of U.S. registry.

We also estimate that it would take about 12 work-hours per product to comply with the basic requirements of this proposed AD. The average labor rate is \$85 per work-hour. Based on these figures, we estimate the cost of this proposed AD on U.S. operators to be \$169,320, or \$1,020 per product.

We have received no definitive data that would enable us to provide a cost estimate for the on-condition actions specified in this proposed AD.

### **Authority for This Rulemaking**

Title 49 of the United States Code specifies the FAA's authority to issue rules on aviation safety. Subtitle I, section 106, describes the authority of the FAA Administrator. "Subtitle VII: Aviation Programs," describes in more detail the scope of the Agency's authority.

We are issuing this rulemaking under the authority described in "Subtitle VII, Part A, Subpart III, Section 44701: General requirements." Under that section, Congress charges the FAA with promoting safe flight of civil aircraft in air commerce by prescribing regulations for practices, methods, and procedures the Administrator finds necessary for safety in air commerce. This regulation is within the scope of that authority because it addresses an unsafe condition that is likely to exist or develop on products identified in this rulemaking action.

### **Regulatory Findings**

We determined that this proposed AD would not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This proposed AD would not have a substantial direct effect on the States, on the relationship between the national Government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify this proposed regulation:

1. Is not a "significant regulatory action" under Executive Order 12866;
2. Is not a "significant rule" under the DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034, February 26, 1979);

3. Will not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska; and
4. Will not have a significant economic impact, positive or negative, on a substantial number of small entities under the criteria of the Regulatory Flexibility Act.

#### **List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39**

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

#### **The Proposed Amendment**

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA proposes to amend 14 CFR part 39 as follows:

#### **PART 39 - AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVES**

1. The authority citation for part 39 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 106(g), 40113, 44701.

#### **§ 39.13 [Amended]**

2. The FAA amends § 39.13 by adding the following new airworthiness directive (AD):

**Airbus:** Docket No. FAA-2015-8134; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-256-AD.

#### **(a) Comments Due Date**

We must receive comments by [INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

#### **(b) Affected ADs**

None.



**(c) Applicability**

This AD applies to all Airbus airplanes identified in paragraphs (c)(1) and (c)(2) of this AD, certificated in any category.

(1) Airbus Model A300 B2-1A, B2-1C, B2K-3C, B2-203, B4-2C, B4-103, and B4-203 airplanes.

(2) Airbus Model A300 B4-601, B4-603, B4-620, B4-622, B4-605R, B4-622R, F4-605R, F4-622R, and C4-605R Variant F airplanes.

**(d) Subject**

Air Transport Association (ATA) of America Code 57, Wings.

**(e) Reason**

This AD was prompted by a report of cracking of the lower tension bolt area at rib one junction (both sides) of the lower wing. We are issuing this AD to detect and correct crack initiation of the fittings of the Frame (FR) 40 lower wing locations, which could result in reduced structural integrity of the airplane.

**(f) Compliance**

Comply with this AD within the compliance times specified, unless already done.

**(g) Repetitive High Frequency Eddy Current Inspections**

Within 1,000 flight hours after the effective date of this AD: Do a high frequency eddy current (HFEC) inspection for cracking of fasteners 1 through 3 at the left-hand and right-hand sides of the FR40 lower junction, and of the fitting around the fastener holes, in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of Airbus Service Bulletins A300-57-0257 (for Model A300 B2-1A, B2-1C, B2K-3C, B2-203, B4-2C, B4-103, and

B4-203 airplanes) or A300-57-6115 (for Model A300 B4-601, B4-603, B4-620, B4-622, B4-605R, B4-622R, F4-605R, F4-622R, and C4-605R Variant F airplanes), both dated April 4, 2014, as applicable. If no cracking is found, repeat the HFEC inspection at intervals not to exceed 1,000 flight hours until a rototest inspection required by paragraph (h)(2) of this AD has been done.

**(h) Repetitive Rototest Inspections**

Within 36 months after the effective date of this AD: Remove the fasteners and measure the diameter of the fastener holes; and, before further flight, do the applicable actions required by paragraph (h)(1) or (h)(2) of this AD, in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of Airbus Service Bulletin A300-57-0257 (for Model A300 B2-1A, B2-1C, B2K-3C, B2-203, B4-2C, B4-103, and B4-203 airplanes) or A300-57-6115 (for Model A300 B4-601, B4-603, B4-620, B4-622, B4-605R, B4-622R, F4-605R, F4-622R, and C4-605R Variant F airplanes), as applicable.

(1) If one or more of the hole diameters is outside the tolerance of the nominal diameter, and outside the tolerance of the first and second oversize: Do the applicable corrective actions required by paragraph (i) of this AD.

(2) If all of the hole diameters are within the tolerance of the nominal diameter or the first or second oversize: Do detailed and rototest inspections for cracking of the fastener holes at the left-hand and right-hand sides of the FR40 lower junction, in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of Airbus Service Bulletins A300-57-0257 (for Model A300 B2-1A, B2-1C, B2K-3C, B2-203, B4-2C, B4-103, and B4-203 airplanes) or A300-57-6115 (for Model A300 B4-601, B4-603, B4-620, B4-622,

B4-605R, B4-622R, F4-605R, F4-622R, and C4-605R Variant F airplanes), both dated April 4, 2014, as applicable. If no cracking is found, before further flight, install new fasteners of the same diameter in special clearance fit for fasteners 1 through 3 of the FR40 lower junction, in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of Airbus Service Bulletins A300-57-0257 or A300-57-6115, both dated April 4, 2014, as applicable. Repeat the rototest inspection thereafter at intervals not to exceed 7,000 flight cycles. Accomplishment of a rototest inspection required by this paragraph terminates the repetitive HFEC inspections required by paragraph (g) of this AD.

**(i) Corrective Actions**

If, during any inspection required by this AD, any crack is found, or one or more of the hole diameters are outside the tolerance of the nominal diameter: Repair before further flight using a method approved by the Manager, International Branch, ANM-116, Transport Airplane Directorate, FAA; or the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA); or Airbus's EASA Design Organization Approval (DOA).

**(j) Other FAA AD Provisions**

The following provisions also apply to this AD:

**(1) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs):** The Manager, International Branch, ANM-116, Transport Airplane Directorate, FAA, has the authority to approve AMOCs for this AD, if requested using the procedures found in 14 CFR 39.19. In accordance with 14 CFR 39.19, send your request to your principal inspector or local Flight Standards District Office, as appropriate. If sending information directly to the International Branch, send it to ATTN: Dan Rodina, Aerospace Engineer, International

Branch, ANM-116, Transport Airplane Directorate, FAA, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, WA 98057-3356; telephone 425-227-2125; fax 425-227-1149. Information may be emailed to: 9-ANM-116-AMOC-REQUESTS@faa.gov. Before using any approved AMOC, notify your appropriate principal inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager of the local flight standards district office/certificate holding district office. The AMOC approval letter must specifically reference this AD.

**(2) Contacting the Manufacturer:** For any requirement in this AD to obtain corrective actions from a manufacturer, the action must be accomplished using a method approved by the Manager, International Branch, ANM-116, Transport Airplane Directorate, FAA; or the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA); or Airbus's EASA Design Organization Approval (DOA). If approved by the DOA, the approval must include the DOA-authorized signature.

**(3) Required for Compliance (RC):** Except as required by paragraph (i) of this AD: If any service information contains procedures or tests that are identified as RC, those procedures and tests must be done to comply with this AD; any procedures or tests that are not identified as RC are recommended. Those procedures and tests that are not identified as RC may be deviated from using accepted methods in accordance with the operator's maintenance or inspection program without obtaining approval of an AMOC, provided the procedures and tests identified as RC can be done and the airplane can be put back in an airworthy condition. Any substitutions or changes to procedures or tests identified as RC require approval of an AMOC.

**(k) Related Information**

(1) Refer to Mandatory Continuing Airworthiness Information (MCAI) European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) Airworthiness Directive 2014-0272, dated December 12, 2014, for related information. This MCAI may be found in the AD docket on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating it in Docket No. FAA-2015-8134.

(2) For service information identified in this AD, contact Airbus SAS, Airworthiness Office – EAW, 1 Rond Point Maurice Bellonte, 31707 Blagnac Cedex, France; telephone +33 5 61 93 36 96; fax +33 5 61 93 44 51; email [account.airworth-eas@airbus.com](mailto:account.airworth-eas@airbus.com); Internet <http://www.airbus.com>. You may view this service information at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 425-227-1221.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on December 21, 2015.

Michael Kaszycki,  
Acting Manager,  
Transport Airplane Directorate,  
Aircraft Certification Service.

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